

YEOMEN OF THE GUARD.

THE NEW OPERA GILBERT AND SULLIVAN HAVE WRITTEN.

A Tilt at Matrimony—A Question Which Is Now Being Discussed the World Over—A Sketch of the Plot and Some of the Songs.

Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan have had such an unparalleled run of success in comic opera that they have evidently resolved lately to try their well-apprenticed hands on the romantic and grand, says an exchange. "Ruddy Gore" was something of a transition work, in which they began to shed their pollywog tails of comicality and to develop the leg appendages of the frog of tragedy. But the work was such a doubtful one that the most accommodating listener hardly knew in some of the scenes whether he was expected to laugh or cry; and so, in his hesitation, he did neither.

Gilbert's brain is full of invention, and he seems to be ready to evolve an idea into a plot at very short notice. His operas all develop naturally from the general basis of his very funny "Pinafore," which gave him his start as a jester in rhyme. "Pinafore" was the full-grown "Captain Reese," in the ballad beginning:

Of all the ships that sailed the blue
No ship contained a better crew
Than that of worthy Captain Reese,
Commanding of "The Manteplow."

"Iolanthe" was the development of the "Fairy Curate" in which the handsome young fellow of the cloth was supposed to be visited by a beautiful young woman, who, he claimed, on being discovered, was his fairy mother, and a couple of hundred years old.

The "Yeomen of the Guard" starts from the ballad of "Annie Pothero," a melo-dramatic postoffice maiden engaged to the public executioner. The man to be executed was an old lover of Annie's, on which account the executioner proposes to use a very dull axe, to increase the victim's misery. This proves too much for Annie's tender nerves, and she resolves to deliver a pardon she has kept back in the mail and to marry the culprit, and the ballad says "she did." From this ballad springs the "Yeomen of the Guard."

The foundation of the opera is evidently a tilt at matrimony. Gilbert, certainly, has a grudge against weddings, a kind of Whitechapel horror of the United States, as if in his mind marriage was a failure.

The opera opens by a despairing love song by Phoebe, who is engaged to the head jester, but who loves the jester's proposed victim. The courtship throughout the work is the expression of vain love on the jester's part, answered by evasion and scorn upon hers. Yet, without any improvement in their mental condition, they are at last married, he being completely fooled by her giving him a hand without a heart, and boasting of her own insincerity.

In the second place the hero is made to win in the most demonstrative manner possible a girl who is already head and ears in love with him. According to the usual play-going ethics he should marry her but he does not. Instead of this he is married to the companion of the strolling jester, and thus another heart is broken in the play. As a preparation for this the jester is made to utter this sentiment against matrimony: "Though I am a fool my folly has a limit."

Gilbert expresses his contempt for the way women are won from men who are sincere by the trio sung and acted in the presence of the tortured jester, saying:

A man who would woo a fair maid
Should 'pretence him to the trade,
And study all day
In methodical way
How to flatter, cajole and persuade,
He should 'pretence him to the trade,
And practice from morn till 'even,
And when he's of age,
If he will 'till he's of age,
He may capture the heart of a queen.

Jack Point, the jester, loves his companion, Elsie, to the end; but, against all play ethics, he is utterly disappointed. The overwillingness of women to marry for profit, or to temporarily better their condition, is set off in the trio between Elsie, Point and the Lieutenant:

How say you, maiden, will you wed
A man about to lose his head?

Both she and her lover agree to sink their mutual consideration temporarily, and against all serious precedent, Fairfax and Elsie are solidly married.

Elsie, the heroine, thus sells herself for a little money; Phoebe sells herself to the jester as the price of a secret; and Sergeant Merrill gives himself to the woman he abominates for the same consideration.

Gilbert has certainly made a point in showing the money jester to be the only noble or worthy character in the play. In the climax of the opera, which comes, singularly enough, at the end of the first act, the jester gives the key to the situation in the words:

"All founded with despair, I rave;
Your hand to him you freely gave;
It's woe to me; not woe to you.
My laugh is dead; my heart unmanned;
A jester with a sad, sad heart!
A lover, loverless, I stand
To womankind forever dead!"

The opera should be called "Jack Point, or the Strolling Jester," as he is in every respect, the hero and the hardest-worked character, and, in fact, the only one that enlists the sympathy of the listener. The lesson of the opera is really the pathetic truth, that the most desecrating are the most ill-treated and neglected; that to be wicked is to be successful, and to be virtuous is to fail in the deepest desires of human experience. Truly, this jester is the saddest character that Gilbert has produced. At his very entrance he gives a touch of his quality in saying: "It is the very marriage of pro and con, and no such lopsided union either, as times go; for pro is not more unlike con than man is unlike woman; yet, men and women marry every day, with none to say, 'Oh, the pity of it, but I, and fools like me.'"

At Elsie's suggestion they then give the crowd the singing farce of the "Merryman and His Maid," a duet, where point begins:

I have a song to sing, oh!
It is sung to the moon
By a love-lorn fool
Who died from the mocking throng, oh!
It is the song of a merryman, moping, moping,
Whose soul was sad, and whose glance was grim.

Who's that up and who craved no crumb,
As he begged for the love of a lady.
It is this song also that Gilbert uses to end as well as to begin the real work of the opera. As the poor jester wanders alone in the careless and mocking throng, the reality of life becomes almost painfully pathetic. The fact that the loss of love to a sensitive nature is almost equal to the loss of life, is something that Gilbert has taken great pains to portray; but as the ordinary comic opera patron fails to realize it, he does not become enthusiastic, and, therefore, at the end of the opera suffers. Undoubtedly, if Gilbert had been either less truthful or more artistically conventional, his work would have been more successful. Has he a deeper purpose in showing up society's masks? He seems to have, and it may be a good one.

SOMETHING OF CITY LIFE.

Grave Robbing is Not What It Was Wont to Be.

Grave robbing is not what it used to be. Too many men have gone into the business and glutted the market with subjects.

With the opening of the season early last fall an unusually large number of men engaged in the business.

The result was that the market was glutted, and prices forced down so that a man could hardly make a living by robbing graves, unless he had a special contract with some college.

Then the more enterprising of the craft went out of the business because it was not sufficiently remunerative.

Now that the ground over the graves is frozen to a depth of a foot or two, a man has to dig his way through the snow to get to a grave, and these low prices amateurs can't keep pace with the present demand for subjects. The result is that the medical colleges are short for cadavers. For instance, not a single subject has the Columbia College dissecting-room been able to get for three weeks.

The Georgetown Medical College has also been unable to secure the usual number of subjects, but they have not used so many this winter as usual, anyway. For the reason that they have their subjects from the medical colleges, and these are short for cadavers. For instance, not a single subject has the Columbia College dissecting-room been able to get for three weeks.

Another reason for the scarcity of material for the anatomical demonstrator's knife is that the police have been more than usually active in their watchfulness to prevent these depredations among the ranks of the dead. There is a cemetery from which the colleges have drawn considerable portions of their material which has never been mentioned as an aid to medical advancement in the newspapers, because the police have not as yet been able to catch any one there.

In methodical way, while the man in charge of the cemetery was making his rounds, he found a body that he had himself seen buried lying on top of the ground beside the open grave. The mark of a rope around the dead woman's neck explained the matter. The grave-robbers were dissatisfied with the woman after they had pulled her out of the grave and looked at her and they didn't bother to replace the body. This same thing happened again a few mornings later and still another subject was taken a week after.

The superintendent of the cemetery got mad. He objected to this additional work of going around in the morning and burying the dead again, and he ordered the men to be supercilious body-snatchers. So he notified the police. The police watched the graveyard so closely that the grave-robbers were unable to get any more subjects from it and so quite a considerable portion of the supply which came from this source was cut off.

Getting Home From a Party, or, the Adventure of a Night.

It was over a week ago, but the story has just got out—not generally enough though—so that there is no danger that the actors' names will ever get out.

A young lady, with a blonde moustache, started home from an evening party with a young man with a moustache of just the right golden shade to look like part of the yellow champagne he was drinking, in a common, hired hack—a "nightingale."

She, our young lady, was not a "society belle," or the "daughter of a prominent official," but she was a handsome, popular young woman, whose mother's name is on the best of the list of the city.

Her young lady had drunk quite a bit of champagne, and she was hardly well, anyway, and the young man with the blonde moustache—well, the less said about him the less likely he is to be mentioned in the papers.

Some time later this same hack was trotting up one of the numbered streets that cross the city, and the young man with the blonde moustache was driving with the old nags in a sleepy trot and the jester fast asleep and full of rum on the box. It wouldn't be the "daughter of a prominent official," but there would be a good natured policeman and a sleeping watchman to be got into trouble. When the hack rattled up to the railroad tracks the man who is hired to raise

and lower the gates at the crossing was sound asleep in his box.

He had "cock-eyed" the gates—left them raised high enough so that a wagon could pass under the centre, and still low enough so that if there should be trouble he could swear that they were down—before he went to sleep. The horses in the old hack didn't go exactly under the centre of the gates and the result was that the sleepy driver was scraped off before he could say "Jack Robinson." He had dropped one of the reins, but, as he fell, held onto the other convulsively and this pulled the horses around at a right angle and they started down the railroad track.

The jester was stunned by his fall and a minute after a scared-looking young man with a blonde moustache had a dejected droop at its ends, stuck his head out of the window.

As he did so a big policeman ran up and looked into the cab. The young man with the blonde moustache didn't hesitate an instant. He opened the opposite door and disappeared down the railroad tracks in the darkness as if he never intended to stop.

Then the big policeman looked into the back and saw a mighty pretty girl crying as if her heart would break. Her wrap fell back from her shoulders and he was in evening dress in his edges. The policeman was just as sorry for her as he could be and he didn't need to ask her any questions.

He told her she had no need to feel uneasy, that the jester would drive her home all right.

But she hadn't a cent of money with her, and Jester was slow to accept promises from any one in payment of back hire.

The jester's bill would be some two or three dollars, and the policeman didn't have fifty cents. The jester was still unconscious, and the big policeman, though he knew well that he had no business to do it, and would be fined or dismissed if he did, volunteered to drive her home himself. The tears that she shed when she saw the policeman that he would drive her anywhere if he was dismissed a hundred times for it.

She wouldn't tell him the number of her house, but said she lived near the corner of Blank and Blank streets, and if he would take her there she would easily slip into her house without being noticed by her mother. The policeman took off his shiny badge and put it into his pocket. Then he asked the young lady inside to hold his helmet and club and picked up the drunken jester's hat and put it on.

When he got up on the box he would pass for a jester anywhere. And he whipped the nags into a dirty speedy gallop and took the young lady home and came back and woke up the jester and sent him off with a warning not to go to sleep on his box again and rang in from his box, answering the stationkeeper with as cheerful an "O K" as he ever shouted into the telephone in the little octagon patrol box in his life.

The \$8.00. Frook and Sack Suits are being sold beyond doubt one of the greatest bargains we ever offered.

After all, it is the popular vote that elects a man. The vote that defeats him is bound to be unpopular with his followers.—(New Orleans Picayune.)

Immense bargains to be had at Hamburger's Fire and Smoke Sale.

The mocking birds in Orange, Cal., feed on the berries that grow on the Chinese mimbrilla tree, and this, you know, makes them tipsy. They act very foolishly after a hearty meal, and stagger about badly intoxicated.

The largest continuous sleeping-car service in the world is that of the Pullman Company, which runs through sleepers from San Diego, Cal., to Chicago, a distance of 2,811 miles.

There are only about 5,000 elephants in the world, and the number is decreasing every year.

CITY SPECIALS.

Holiday Goods on the Installment Plan.

John Radden, the popular installment merchant at 430 and 432 South Broadway, has a full supply of furniture, stoves, clocks, rugs, willow ware, chairs and many other substantial articles that he is offering on the installment plan. His entire assortment can be bought at cash prices on the installment plan, easy weekly or monthly payments to suit the purchaser.

All Things Bright and Beautiful.

At CHAPMAN & TAYLOR'S, 915 Pa. Ave.

Houghton & Co.'s Holiday Goods.

This representative furniture, carpet and up-to-date establishment, centrally located at 1215 and 1220 F Street northwest, are offering on "thousand dollars' worth" of holiday goods, suitable for Christmas presents, at special prices for spot cash during this month. Ladies with young men with blonde moustaches, started home from an evening party with a young man with a moustache of just the right golden shade to look like part of the yellow champagne he was drinking, in a common, hired hack—a "nightingale."

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